
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 3rd October

WPJF Planning Meeting

6pm, Basement, Peace & Justice Centre, 35
Kingsmills Rd, Hightown, Wrexham
wrexhamsaw@yahoo.com
0845 330 4505

There will also be a meeting in November.
Contact us after Oct 3rd for the date.

Fri 7th – Sun 9th October

“Films on the Edge” Anarchist Film Festival

1 in 12 Club, Albion St, Bradford
Tickets: £10 for 3 days / £5 per day.
film1in12@yahoo.co.uk

Sat 8th October

Keep Space For Peace Demo.

RAF Menwith Hill, N. Yorkshire
PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF PROTEST
called for by the GLOBAL NETWORK AGAINST
NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND POWER IN SPACE (GN)
Speaker: Bruce Gagnon - Coordinator of GN
12 noon to 4 or 5pm
Organised by the Campaign for the Accountability
of American Bases (CAAB)
01482 702033 or www.caab.org.uk

Sat 22nd October

Anarchist Bookfair

10am - 6pm
Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Rd, London N7
<http://freespace.virgin.net/anarchist.bookfair/>

Sun 23rd October

Freedom to Protest Conference

11am - 5pm, Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Rd,
London N7. Admission free.
To share experiences, and promote mutual aid and
co-ordination among groups threatened by repres-
sive laws and to develop effective strategies for
standing up for our freedom to protest against
injustice and oppression.
conference@freedomtoprotest.org.uk

Sat 22nd – Mon 24th October, Derby

Trident Ploughshares weekend of action against Rolls Royce

RR is the driving force behind Trident. Culminating
in a nonviolent blockade of Rolls Royce on Monday.
www.tridentploughshares.org
0845 330 3877.

Tues 25th October

Bruce Kent speaks at the United Nations Youth & Students Association

Also, Carole Isis sings for peace
Bangor University Main Arts Lecture Theatre,
College Road, Bangor, 6pm. Free.

Tues 25th October

No 2 ID Cards and the Fight for Civil Liberties

Speaker - Leanne Wood, Plaid Cymru AM &
Shadow Social Justice Minister.
7.30pm, Miners' Institute, Grosvenor Rd, Wxm.
Organised by Wrexham Socialist Forum.
01978 362193 email val935@yahoo.co.uk

Tue 8th November, Llangollen, Sun Inn

Attila the Stockbroker, Performance Poet
David Rovics, Political Singer/songwriter
Tickets £5. 01978 860079.

Thu 10th November

WPJF Film evening

7pm, Trinity Church, King Street, Wrexham
Jo Wilding's "Letter to the Prime Minister"
& Hamodi Jasim's "Testimonies from Fallujah"
Marking the anniversary of attacks on Fallujah.
Free entry. We will be making a collection for
Child Victims of War.
wrexhamsaw@yahoo.com
0845 330 4505

Monday 14th November

WPJF Vigil

to remember the attacks on Fallujah
Plas Coch Roundabout, Mold Rd, Wrexham
From 5pm
Please bring banners, placards and nightlights.
wrexhamsaw@yahoo.com
0845 330 4505

Fri 25th – Sat 26th November **BeyondTV 6 - Annual International Alternative Film Festival**

Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea
www.undercurrents.org/beyondtv

Tues 29th November

Revolution in Venezuela: An Eyewitness Account

Speaker - Ramon Samblas
from Hands Off Venezuela
7.30pm, Miners' Institute, Grosvenor Rd, Wxm.
Organised by Wrexham Socialist Forum.
01978 362193 email val935@yahoo.co.uk

Sat 3rd December

International Day of Action on Climate Change

London Demo. Coincides with climate talks in
Montreal (First "Meeting of Parties"
to the Kyoto protocol).
<http://www.globefox.com/cacc/>

LET'S CALL THE WHOLE THING OFF



"Giant puffball" radome at Menwith Hill

Last July 4th Geoff Sands joined protesters outside RAF Menwith Hill for the annual Independence from America Day.

Travelling along the A59 roughly halfway between Skipton and Harrogate, you can't miss the cluster of giant white radomes, mushrooming like sinister puff-balls from the Yorkshire Moors. A road sign indicates that this is RAF Menwith Hill.

But "RAF" Menwith Hill has got as much to do with the Royal Air Force as some other nominally RAF bases at Lakenheath, Mildenhall, Fairford, Molesworth and half a dozen others – that's to say, precious little. Most of the personnel on the base are US citizens, four hundred US military and a thousand US civilians: computer experts, engineers, and linguists. Behind the razor wire lies a small town of some two thousand people with houses, shops, schools, a chapel and a sports centre.

Spun by the Ministry of Defence as a "communications relay centre", it is in fact the biggest electronic monitoring station in the world, capable of intercepting two million email, phone and fax communications per hour from Europe, Russia, the Middle East and North Africa, and of communicating with space satellites positioned above this grand area. The results are fed directly to Fort Meade, Maryland, the headquarters of the USA's National Security Agency. They are shared with British counterparts on a need-to-know basis. As you'd expect, it's the NSA that decides what Britain needs to know.

Although the detail of what goes on at Menwith Hill is obscure to outsiders, in general terms it's clearly a vital component of the US war machine. As the base has grown over the years, plans for new construction have been lodged with the local planning authority. This is just a matter of protocol. The local authority has no right to refuse or modify any developments at the base. At the national level Labour MPs such as Alice Mahon and Bob Cryer, late MP for Bradford South, have raised the issue of accountability in the Commons, only to be fobbed off with ministerial waffle about "confidential arrangements".

Menwith Hill points up the nature of the relationship between Britain and the USA: the so-called "special relationship" dating back to the Second World War that has been embraced by the leaders of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal parties alike (the late Ted Heath being a partial exception), and for the last eight years,

at a time when Washington has lurched even farther to the right, pursued so fervently by the Blair government that the UK has been converted into a virtual satellite.

What better place then to protest against the special relationship? And what better day than to 4th July to hold an Independence from America Day? This year (it's been held for the last five years) about three hundred protesters gathered outside the main gates. Not a bad turnout, considering the rainy day and the fact that the G8 protest had grabbed most people's attention. The speakers were Lindis Percy, who is familiar with the inside of the base, Jan Burgess, and Scott Ritter. The main focus was on the cynicism of the pretexts offered by Bush and Blair for the invasion and occupation of Iraq.



Scott Ritter addresses protesters at Menwith Hill

Scott Ritter, an American who had worked in Iraq as a United Nations arms inspector, was in a position to give the most authoritative account of what had happened in the run-up to war, and to demolish the myth of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction. He made the crucial point that Blair's support and his presentational skills made it much easier for the Bush administration to sell their policies to the US public. He admitted to feeling uneasy about addressing us. He described himself as a Republican and a patriot. Before working for the UN he'd been an intelligence officer in the US Marine Corps. "I'm a United States citizen who loves my country, who has been to war for my country. But we are doing things today globally that are an affront to what I believe the USA stands for".

Extract from the Declaration of Independence from America:

"We call upon the government of the USA to cease from occupation of any part of British land and withdraw its military powers. This United Kingdom is... free and independent in the choice of how we exercise our right of self-defence."

Lindis Percy, Anni Rainbow, and their colleagues in the Campaign for Accountability of American Bases (CAAB) raise similar concerns: Don't London's close links to Washington pose a threat to the values that some of us believe the UK should stand for? Can we square it with our consciences, is it in our interests, to persist with a foreign policy that amounts to being handcuffed to a psychopath?

CAAB contact details:

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